

OUTGOING MESSAGE

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CLASSIFICATION

SECRET

MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

DATE-TIME GROUP

CITE

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

STAFF

DIRECTOR

CONF: INFO: FILE

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TO: IMMEDIATE SAIGON-4

25X1

FOR MR. GEORGE CARVER FROM MR. BOB LAYTON-4

25X1

REF:

1. THE CIA/DIA ESTIMATES OF THE OB OF COMMUNIST AND SVN COMBAT FORCES GIVEN DO NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS -- ONLY AVERAGE ASSIGNED STRENGTHS IN ORGANIZED UNITS. GIVEN THE STATE OF COLLECTION AND THE FLUIDITY OF THE MILITARY SITUATION, OB DATA CAN AT BEST BE VIEWED ONLY AS A ROUGH APPROXIMATION FOR ANY POINT IN TIME. THEY WILL NOT REFLECT EITHER COMBAT LOSSES OR REPLACEMENTS IN A TIMELY MANNER. IN ADDITION, COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON QUALITATIVE FACTORS THAT CANNOT BE EXPRESSED NUMERICALLY.4

2. DATA ON COMMUNIST OB ARE ALSO INSUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE SEPARATE ESTIMATES ONLY ONE MONTH APART. FOR EXAMPLE, INFORMATION RECEIVED DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS INDICATES THAT TWO INFANTRY DIVISIONS FROM THE NORTH DEPLOYED INTO MRS 2 AND 3 OF SVN UNDETECTED BETWEEN LATE JANUARY AND THE FIRST OF MARCH. IN

DATE: 31 MARCH 1975
 ORIG: BELAYTON
 UNIT: ACTING NIO/SSEA
 EXT:

25X1

OUTGOING MESSAGE

Approved For Release 2004/06/14 : CIA-RDP80R01720R000400100015-7

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ADDITION, THE 200,000 FIGURE DOES NOT YET INCLUDE HANOI'S COMMITMENT OF AT LEAST ONE MORE INFANTRY DIVISION PLUS SEVERAL AIR DEFENSE REGIMENTS WHICH ARE NOW MOVING TOWARD SVN. UPON ARRIVAL, THESE UNITS ALONE WILL ADD ANOTHER 10,000 TROOPS TO THE ORDER OF BATTLE. 4

COMMUNIST REGULAR COMBAT FORCES IN SVN: 4

| | 28 JAN 1973 | 1 APR 1975 |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| MR 1 | 72,000 | 85,000 |
| MR 2 | 25,000 | 51,000 |
| MR 3 | 25,000 | 38,000 |
| MR 4 | 27,000 | 26,000 |
| TOTAL | 149,000 | 200,000 |

3. FIGURES ON GOVERNMENT COMBAT FORCES SUFFER FROM MANY OF THE SAME WEAKNESSES AS COMMUNIST STRENGTH ESTIMATES AND DO NOT PORTRAY COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS. THE MOST REVEALING GAUGE IN THE FOLLOWING TABLES OF THE RECENT DISINTEGRATION OF ARVN UNITS IS THE COMPARISON OF THE 210,000 ARVN/VNMC FORCES ON 1 MARCH 1975 WITH THE CURRENT 134,000 STRENGTH -- A DECLINE OF OVER 36 PERCENT.

DATE:

ORIG:

UNIT:

EXT:

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RELEASING OFFICER

COORDINATING OFFICER

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

CLASSIFICATION

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

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THE 1 APRIL ESTIMATE IS PRELIMINARY, PENDING RECEIPT OF THE MONTHLY DAO REPORT ON THE ASSIGNED STRENGTHS OF GVN UNITS.
RVNAF REGULAR COMBAT FORCES:

28 JANUARY 1973

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN/VNMC | TOTAL |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| MR 1 | 16,000 | 81,000 | 97,000 |
| MR 2 | 28,000 | 48,000 | 76,000 |
| MR 3 | 32,000 | 54,000 | 86,000 |
| MR 4 | 48,000 | 53,000 | 101,000 |
| TOTAL | 124,000 | 236,000 | 360,000 |

1 MARCH 1975

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN/MARINE | TOTAL |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| MR 1 | 22,000 | 74,000 | 96,000 |
| MR 2 | 35,000 | 43,000 | 78,000 |
| MR 3 | 39,000 | 51,000 | 90,000 |
| MR 4 | 49,000 | 42,000 | 91,000 |
| TOTAL | 145,000 | 210,000 | 355,000 |

RVNAF REGULAR COMBAT FORCES:

DATE:

ORIG:

UNIT:

EXT:

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1 APRIL 1975

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN | TOTAL |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| MR 1 | - | - | - |
| MR 2 | 35,000 | 30,000 | 65,000 |
| MR 3 | 38,000 | 62,000 | 100,000 |
| MR 4 | 48,000 | 42,000 | 90,000 |
| TOTAL* | 121,000 | 134,000 | 255,000 |

* DOES NOT INCLUDE SOME 35,000 ARVN/MARINE TROOPS REPORTEDLY
EVACUATED SUCCESSFULLY FROM DANANG. 14

4. WE CANNOT RECREATE DAO'S 59,000 FIGURES FOR EFFECTIVE
GOVERNMENT COMBAT TROOPS OR THE 152,000 ASCRIBED TO THE COMMUNIST
FORCES. IN GENERAL, GVN UNITS IN MR 2 ARE COMBAT INEFFECTIVE. WE
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT MOST GVN UNITS IN MRS 3 AND 4 ARE STILL
CAPABLE OF FIGHTING EFFECTIVELY. ON THE COMMUNIST SIDE VIRTUALLY
ALL UNITS ARE ESTIMATED TO BE COMBAT EFFECTIVE. E2 IMPDET-H

C/OPS/INT

C/VNO

DATE: 31 MARCH 1975
ORIG: BELMONTON
UNIT: ACTING NIO/SSEA

25X1

[REDACTED]

COORDINATING OFFICER

EA/NIC

25X1